JOHN ALVEY TURNER'S MUSICAL MONTHLY

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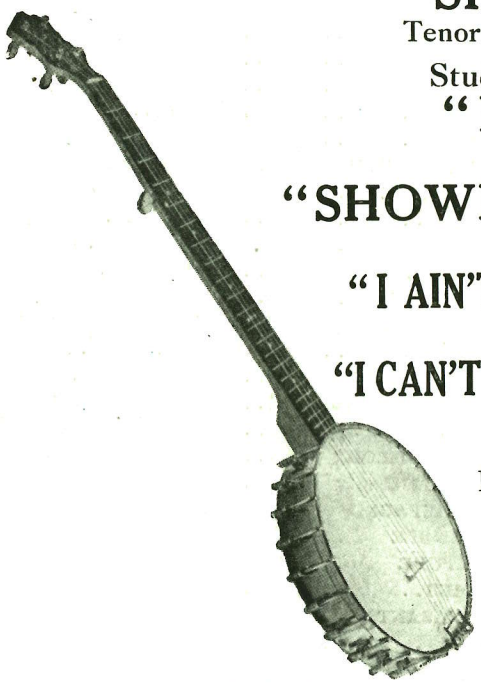

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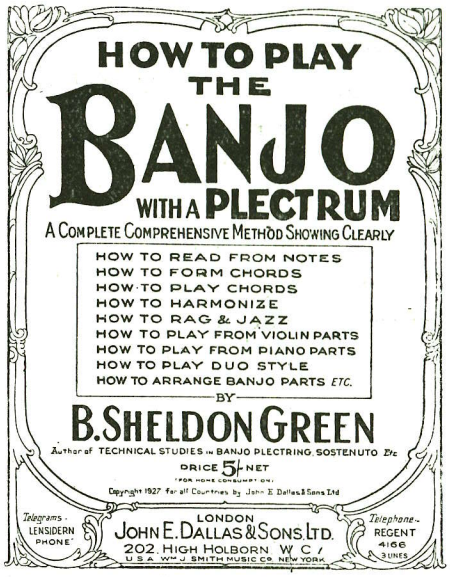
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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Contents. Audition at Birmingham. Phraseology and the Banjo	65
Ken Kapua	66
B.M.G. Matters—by A. De Vekey	67
Emile Grimshaw (Banjo Quartet)	68
B.M.G. Clubs and their work. A reply to Mr. Dykes—by J. W. Whittaker	69
"Shinaniki Da" (Tenor Banjo Solo)—*arr.* by E. T. Taylor	70
Students' Series No. 2. "Barcarolle" (Guitar Solo)—by A. De Vekey	71
"Showin' off the Uke." (Ukulele Solo)—by A. De Vekey	72-73
"I Ain't never been Kissed" (Plectrum Banjo Solo)—*arr.* by E. T. Taylor	74
"I Can't give You Anything but Love Baby" (Finger Banjo Solo)—*arr.* B. Sheaff	75
Plectrum Music in this issue—by E. T. Taylor	76
Ernest Jones	77
Answers to Queries and Correspondence	77
Club Pages	78-79
Playing from Symbols—by B. Sheldon Green	80

AT an audition held by the Columbia Gramophone Co. at Lewis's Birmingham, recently, to discover new talent, Mr. Ernest Jones, the well-known banjoist, was the only successful artiste, and as a result of the test record which he has made in London for the Columbia Gramophone Co., they will shortly produce two double-sided records.

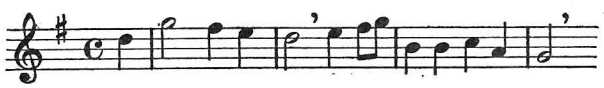
In view of the fact that there 1,052 artistes in the competition, it would seem that the banjo is at last coming into its own again. Outside recording work, Mr. Jones is very well known to thousands of banjo enthusiasts by his broadcast work.

PHRASEOLOGY AND THE BANJO.

IF you have any intentions of becoming a soloist on the banjo, you would do well to give attention to phrasing. Some of you may ask, with judge-like innocence, what is phrasing ?

Phrasing enables you to express in a manner a composer's idea ; just the same as in reading or reciting.

These remarks do not apply to Polka Marches, but to advanced solos ; in the former case your fingers are the principal agents, in the latter your brains and fingers will have to work together.

As an example, let us take a familiar, simple tune, The Blue Bells of Scotland " :

The first and second phrases are marked thus, 2, you will easily see how distinct they are. In some cases a phrase may run into several bars.

In order to make my meaning clear, let us put the idea in another light.

The first few bars of a piece always asks a question, the following bars will always be an answer to that question.

Study your solo, separate the phrases but do not miss them when playing ; try to distinguish the first and final notes of a phrase and give some prominence to them.

Bad phrasing is like bad punctuation ; to be able to perform well it is absolutely necessary to know how to phrase well.

These ideas are trifles, you may say ; true, but trifles make perfection.

ALFD. BANNER.

THE Carlton Banjo Quintette, consisting of Mrs. Dolby, banjoline ; Mr. Dolby, banjo ; Mr. Gibbons, banjo ; Mr. G. Sisley, banjo ; and Mr. C. Sisley, banjoline (Mr. Edgar Godward at the piano), gave some excellent items at a concert held in the Grand Hall, Beckenham. Each item was greatly appreciated, and encores were demanded.

KEN KAPUA

To the Editor, KEYNOTES,

DEAR SIR,—With reference to Mr. B. Sheldon Green's article on " The Steel Guitar " in the March issue of KEYNOTES.

I am in entire agreement with his remarks relative to finger picks as sold in shops. These are of no use at all. The average thumb pick is a most ridiculous piece of work—too small to fit any but a child's thumb, and, as a rule, has too long a picking point, whilst the bent part which fits over the top of the thumb is usually much too short to be of any use, and the bend is generally made at a right angle, which prevents their being altered to a more adaptable shape. With the finger picks it is different ; here we can get several different shapes, but most of them are made from thin German silver or else plated brass, and from a playing point of view are practically useless. Their chief fault lies in their weight —they are *too light* to produce anything like a good tone. A good, round, full tone necessitates a moderately heavy pick. As Mr. Green states, he has to cut his picks to suit his individual ideas, and I am of the opinion that some such plan must be adopted with nearly all the picks at present offered to the public. Another trouble with these picks is the difficulty of getting them to fit snugly and comfortably, and most of them have nasty unfinished edges which cut into the flesh. I am using picks made from heavy gauge spring silver, and with these it is possible to secure a really snug fit.

Concerning the clicking sound which Mr. Green states is caused by the " wide rounded tip of the ordinary pick coming in contact with the vibrating string," this can never be altogether eliminated, as no matter what kind or shape of pick is used there must always be a slight clicking noise, because it is a *metal pick* striking a *metal string* whilst it is vibrating. There is no discernable click when striking a string that is not vibrating. As we *must* use steel strings the only way to reduce this clicking to a minimum is by the use of a softer material in the pick itself. I have tried soft brass, and copper picks, also celluloid, but the result is no better than when using the ordinary nickel picks. Silver is the most satisfactory metal to minimise this bugbear of Hawaiian guitar players.

In connection with the tuning. There may be a lot in what Mr. Green contends, and I always tune my guitar to " G " pitch, but only because I prefer the tone when at this pitch. As I do not play with the piano there is no need to tune to the concert " A " pitch unless a brilliant and penetrating tone is desired in preference to the mellowness of the lower pitch.

Regarding the amount of tone produced by the Hawaiian guitar. Admitted the average guitar is none too good in this respect, but there are models obtainable which give *plenty* of tone and quite sufficient for most purposes. However, if Mr. Green wants a very large instrument there is one already made especially for the Hawaiian style of playing, and the measurements are : —20 inches across widest part ; 8 inches across narrowest part ; 4-3/8 inches at deepest part ; 3/3-8 inches at shallowest part, and 39½ inches in length and I believe the body is carried right up to the third fret. These dimensions certainly lead one to conclude that sufficient tone could be obtained from such a guitar for almost any kind of playing.

I don't know what particular style of holding the guitar is used by Mr. Green, but if he tries playing with the instrument suspended from his neck by a cord or sling he will find a marked increase in the *volume* of tone produced. It must be very clear to anyone who has thought about it at all that when the guitar is held on the knees the back sounding board *cannot* and *does not* vibrate to its fullest extent, but, when slung from the shoulders the *whole of the back* can vibrate *easily* and so add to the volume of tone.

If, as Mr. Green suggests, a larger model was made would a longer arm be a necessity ? I should say the size of the body could be increased—widened, deepened and lengthened—without affecting the length of the arm. In making the body longer the bridge could be put in the same position as at present, *i.e.*, same distance from 12th fret as 12th fret is from the nut. This should be quite satisfactory, and perhaps better, as it would bring the bridge nearer the centre of the body and so allow for easier vibration of the top sounding board. This is the principle adopted in the violin. Further, one can obtain guitars in concert, grand concert and auditorium sizes, but the length of the arm remains the same. Again, if a longer neck is fitted it means a greater distance between the frets, and this would present no little difficulty when one came to play angle chords (slanting the steel) on the first and third strings, at, shall we say, the seventh fret on the first string and fifth fret on the third string. This seems to be a disadvantage that Mr. Green has overlooked, and unless one has a very large hand and a long steel (and can manage to play with the long steel) some of these chords would have to be cut down to a single note and here we lose some of the beauty of the Hawaiian guitar.

Yours very truly,

KEN KAPUA.

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B.M.G. Matters.

By A. de Vekey.

"Glued versus Movable Bridges for Guitars."

I recently received a letter from Mrs. Vandah Olcott-Bickford, America's foremost lady guitariste, authoress of many standard works for the instrument, and Secretary of the American Guitar Society, in which she said that the "glued-on" bridge is the most used in America amongst the eminent guitarists, and is far and away above the "movable" bridge variety, and that she is in complete agreement with my views on the subject, as expressed in a previous issue of KEYNOTES.

This, together with the previous matter relating thereto, coupled with the notes of Mr. F. Winslow in the April issue on guitar adjustment, I think conclusively proves that the movable bridge absolutely fails to produce anything like real guitar tone, the glued bridge model being at present the only type worth considering.

Nevertheless, if any lightly-built movable bridge models appear in the future, I will certainly put them to a test, for like many others, I am always ready to "adopt" anything I find to be really better.

The Steel Guitar Solo "Loure" in the March issue.

One bar, *i.e.*, 1st bar, last line, page 1, seems to give one writer a little trouble. An extract from a letter reads :—

> "Nothing really difficult in your arrangement except bar 1 of the last line in page 1. I find that when striking the E on the first string and then having to move the steel *up* and strike the D on the 2nd, I get a kind of a "glide" on the 1st string sounding more or less the F, though naturally not very loudly. One can also play these notes by moving the steel along the 1st string, just striking the notes required. Kindly say if there is any special way of moving the steel to cut out any unnecessary notes, even if rather faint, when playing as marked."

Answer. Yes. Play the E (1st string, 12th fret) then move the steel back right OFF the 1st string when playing the D (2nd, string 13th fret), and move steel back in the usual way to play C sharp.

If you slide the steel up to the 14th fret to get B on the 3rd string, the same objection will creep in, but if you pull the hand and steel back off the second string, JUST BEFORE you move up to the B, the objection will disappear.

It certainly requires practice, but it is interesting, as it shows *how* these little features can be overcome. In this movement, of the steel, you will note the 3rd finger of the left hand moves back on the different strings, forming an efficient "guard."

Student's Guitar Series No. 2 (Barcarolle) is well within the scope of the average player who is studying the solo side of the instrument.

(") indicates a slight pause.

Numbers in circles, of course, indicate the strings upon which the notes so marked are played.

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Regarding the six introductory bars to Trio. Take Bars 1 and 2. Play as marked with 1st finger and thumb. Note the 1st beat in the 2nd bar is taken with the up-stroke of the 1st finger, the "nails" playing the 2nd, thumb the 3rd, and 1st finger the 4th beat. 3, 4, 5 and 6 are played in a similar manner, with a slight "retard" in the 5th and 6th bars. The Trio is now taken in the usual guitar finger picking style, returning to the 1st movement, which may be played as written, or in the "split-stroke" style if desired.

It will be noted that the melody in the 1st half of the Trio is mainly taken on the 3rd string.

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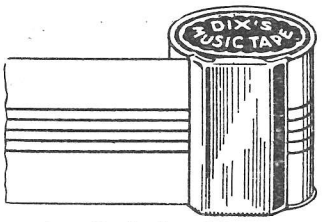

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BROADCASTING DATES.

Mario de Pietro will broadcast from 2 LO on Thursday, May 9th, between 7.45—9 o'clock.

Jan Wien will be broadcasting from the Glasgow Station on Wednesday, May 15th, at 10.45 p.m.

The Ilford Banjo Club held a very successful concert at the Thompson Rooms, High Road, Ilford, on April 18th. Unfortunately space will not allow further detail.

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B.M.G. Clubs and their Work.

A Reply to B. W. DYKES—by J. W. WHITTAKER, (President Leeds B.C.)

I HAVE been going to write a reply to Mr. Dykes' previous article, in his papers treating on the theory of music as applied to the banjo and have been prevented by unforseen circumstances, and now Mr. Dykes comes along with a paper which must set all club members "athynkyng and athynkyng."

He has certainly diagnosed the trouble we had at Leeds last year. Variety *is* the spice of life, and enthusiasm in anything quickly dies down if the same old things are repeated, or the same old combinations are used. Twenty banjos playing in unison or ten firsts and ten seconds are enough to kill anyone's enthusiasm, so we decided to reform the club and make it more of an orchestra—if you like. Beginning in January last, we commenced, and up to the present, so far, progressed satisfactorily in our endeavour to get different instruments in, that everyone is kept interested, and the novices given their chance, as they always feel there is some part they can take.

Mr. Dykes' suggestion about a competition might "go," I would be the last to throw cold water on it, but the difficulty (in ours, as a case in point) was where to get a good conductor ; also getting a team of members to continually practice, and practice, apart from the club pieces, would be in my mind very difficult.

What I would suggest is that there should be an annual gathering of banjo clubs, in the shape of a conference—as it were—perhaps the first might result in a federation of banjo clubs. Who knows ?

Also there ought to be inter-club meetings of adjoining towns or villages. It would broaden the outlook and give the members an enjoyable evening discussing the merits or demerits of various pieces which they either know or would like to know, to say nothing of instrumenst, etc.

Mr. Dykes is right about music being orchestrated. There is quite a lot, enough for present use anyhow, amongst the different publishers. The manufacturers are there with the instruments and the music. It is not their fault, the fault lies with the officers of the various banjo clubs. Things are allowed to muddle along, until reaching the narrow groove, and then begins the fall. Let them find a conductor like the one we have found (amongst our own members), help him, encourage him to point out the failings (and the good points), and then, and then only will the team spirit of a club shout itself.

In conclusion I would like to thank—personally—Mr. Dykes for his splendid articles on theory, transposing a second banjo part, and so on. What a pity they did not start at the beginning and go through as a series of papers on "Theory as applied to banjo, mandoline and guitar," and then sold in book form at a popular price. There is one for fretted instruments, but the price is too high for the average club member.

That is only a suggestion, and I hope Mr. Dykes will take it in that spirit.

One fine day, perhaps, I may meet him and have a little talk on our favourite instrument, as it always is good to meet an enthusiast.

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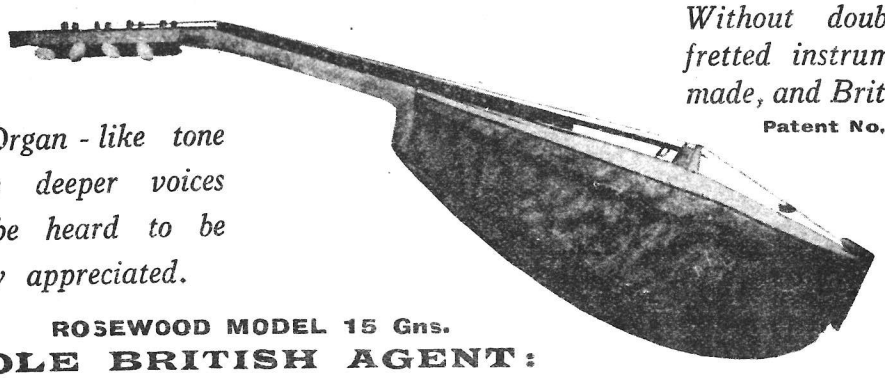
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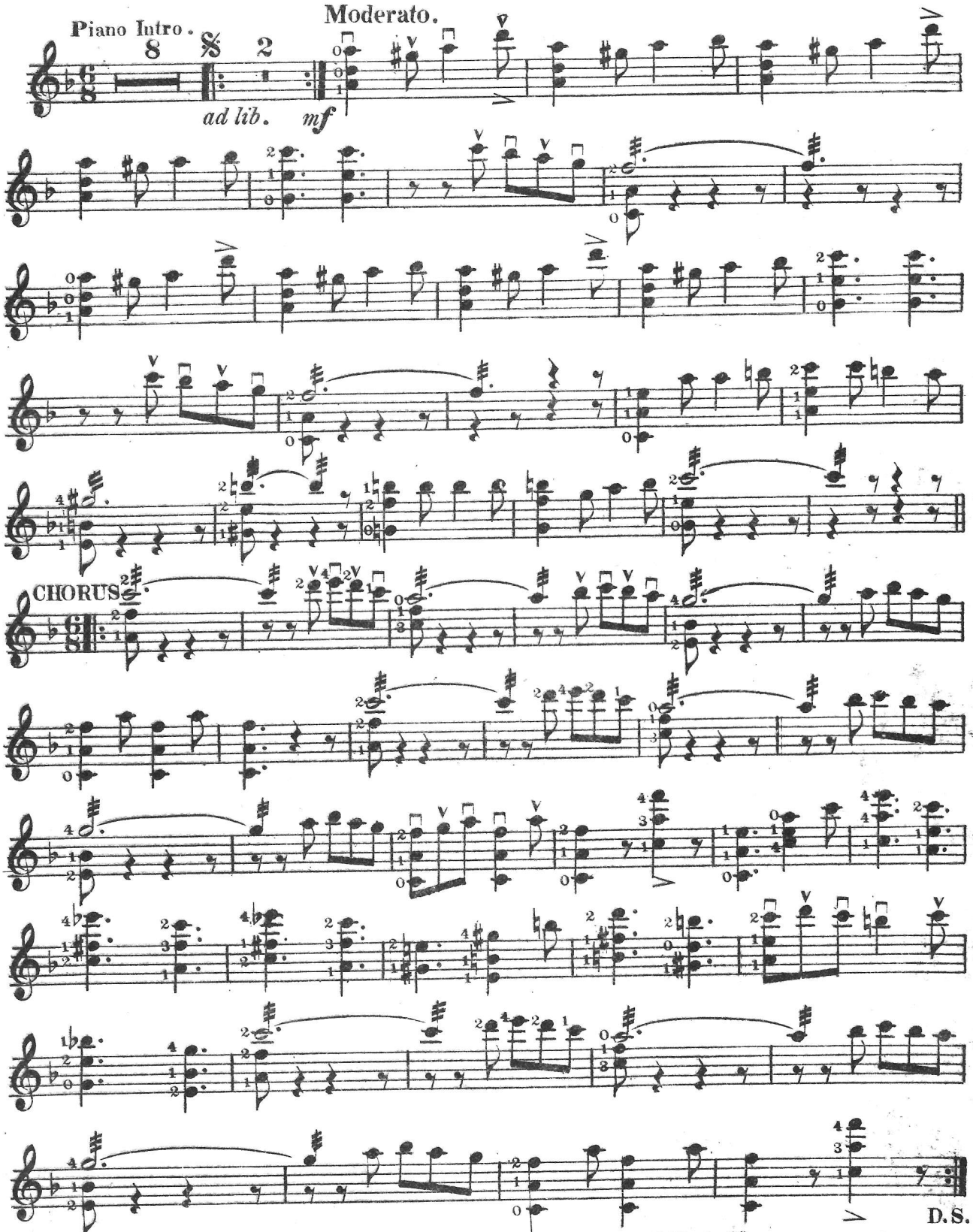
Arr. by **ERNEST TAYLOR.** by **HARRY CARLTON.**

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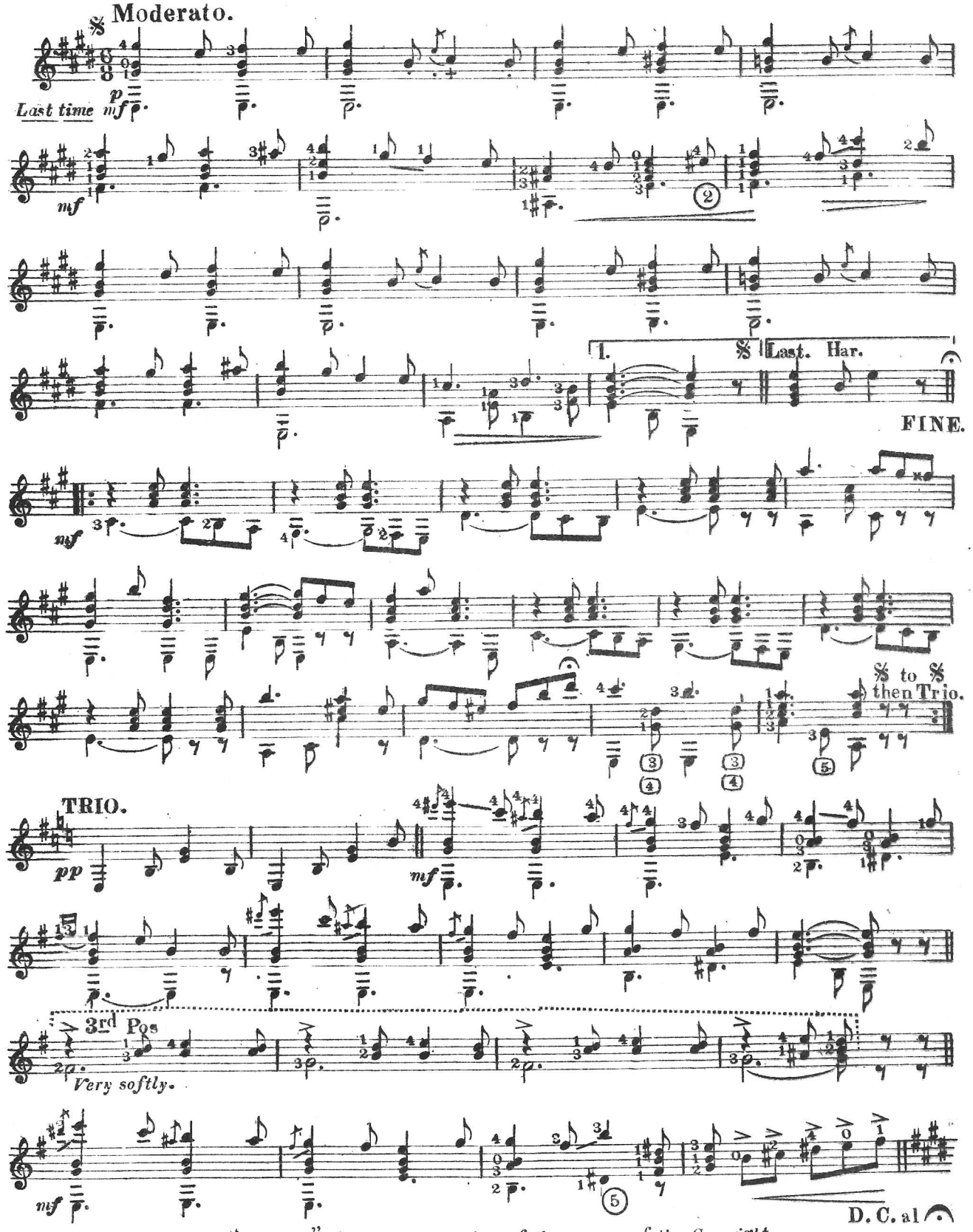
May/29.

Student's Guitar Series.

GUITAR SOLO. **Nº 2. BARCAROLLE.** A. de VÉKEY.

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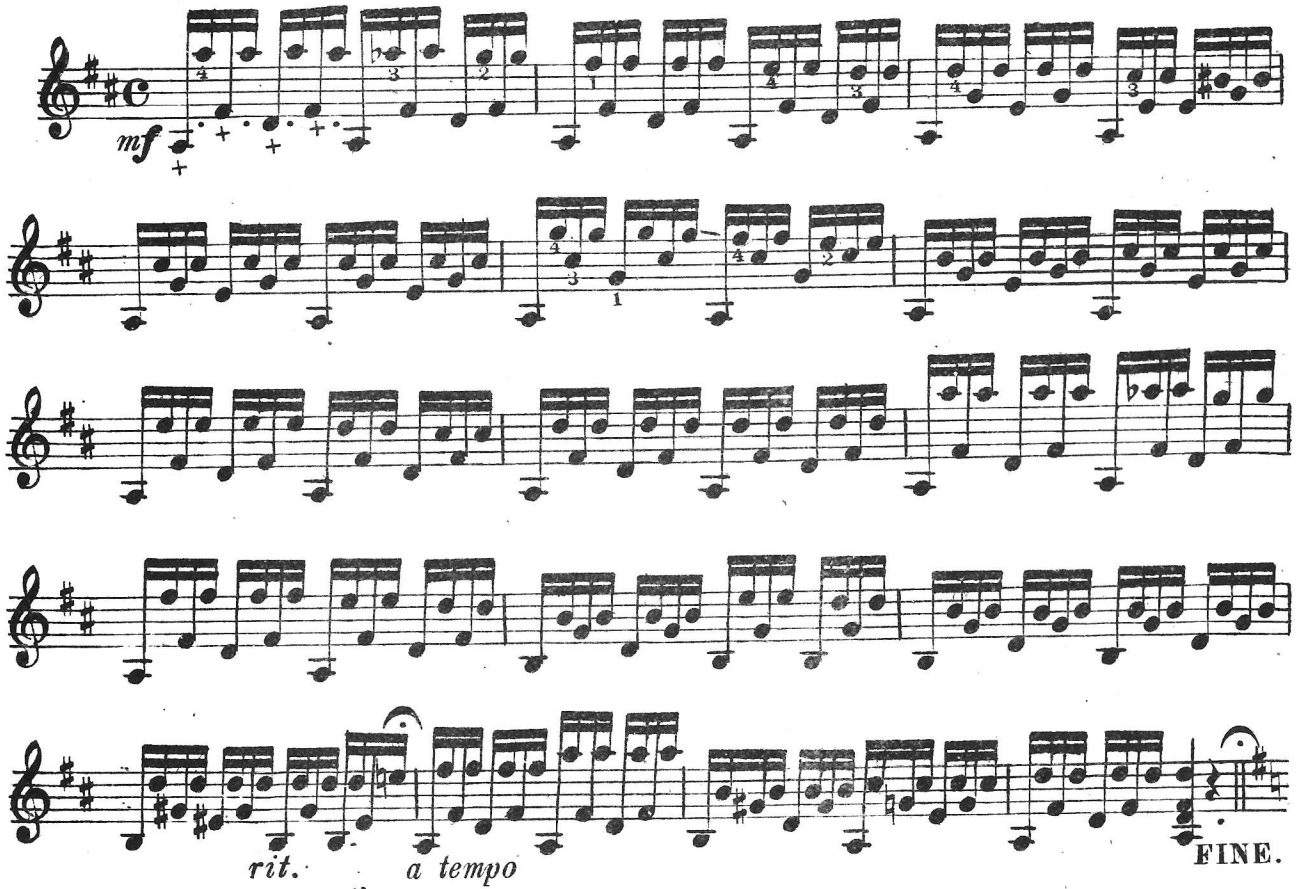
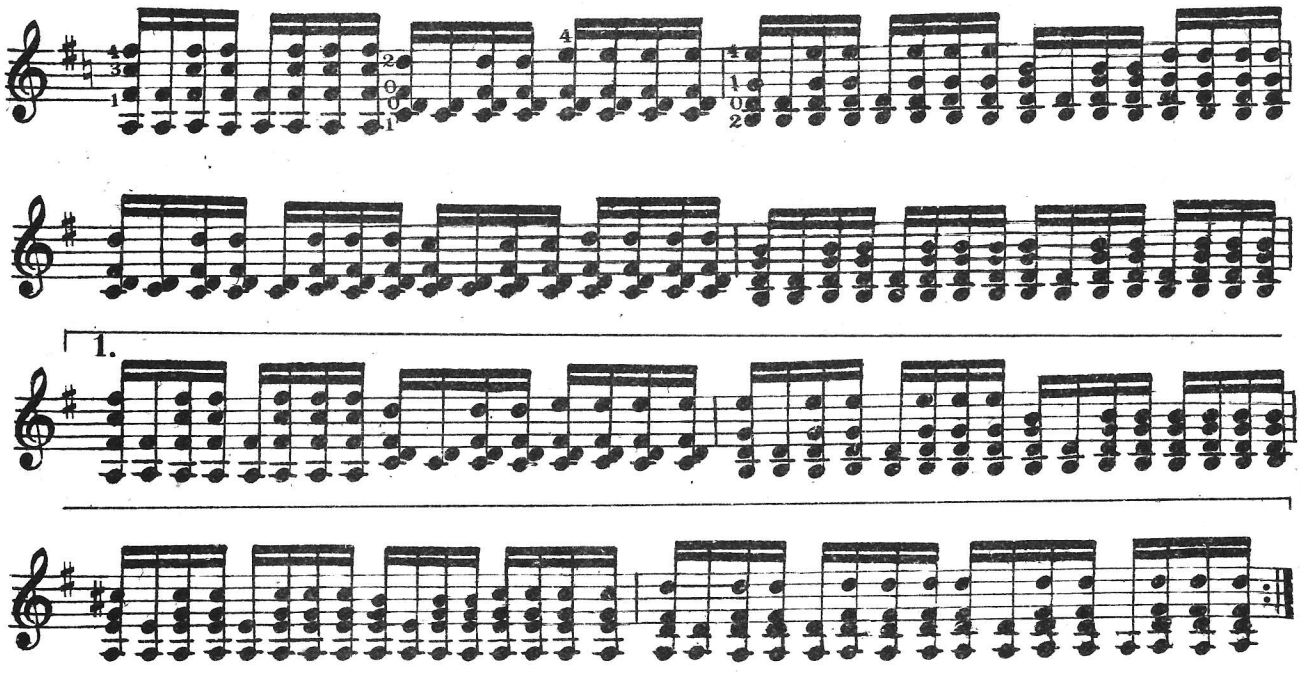
A. de Vékey & Son, Bournemouth.

May/29.

Showin' off the Uke.

UKULELE SOLO. A. de VÉKEY.

Allegretto.

"SPLIT STROKE" this movement.

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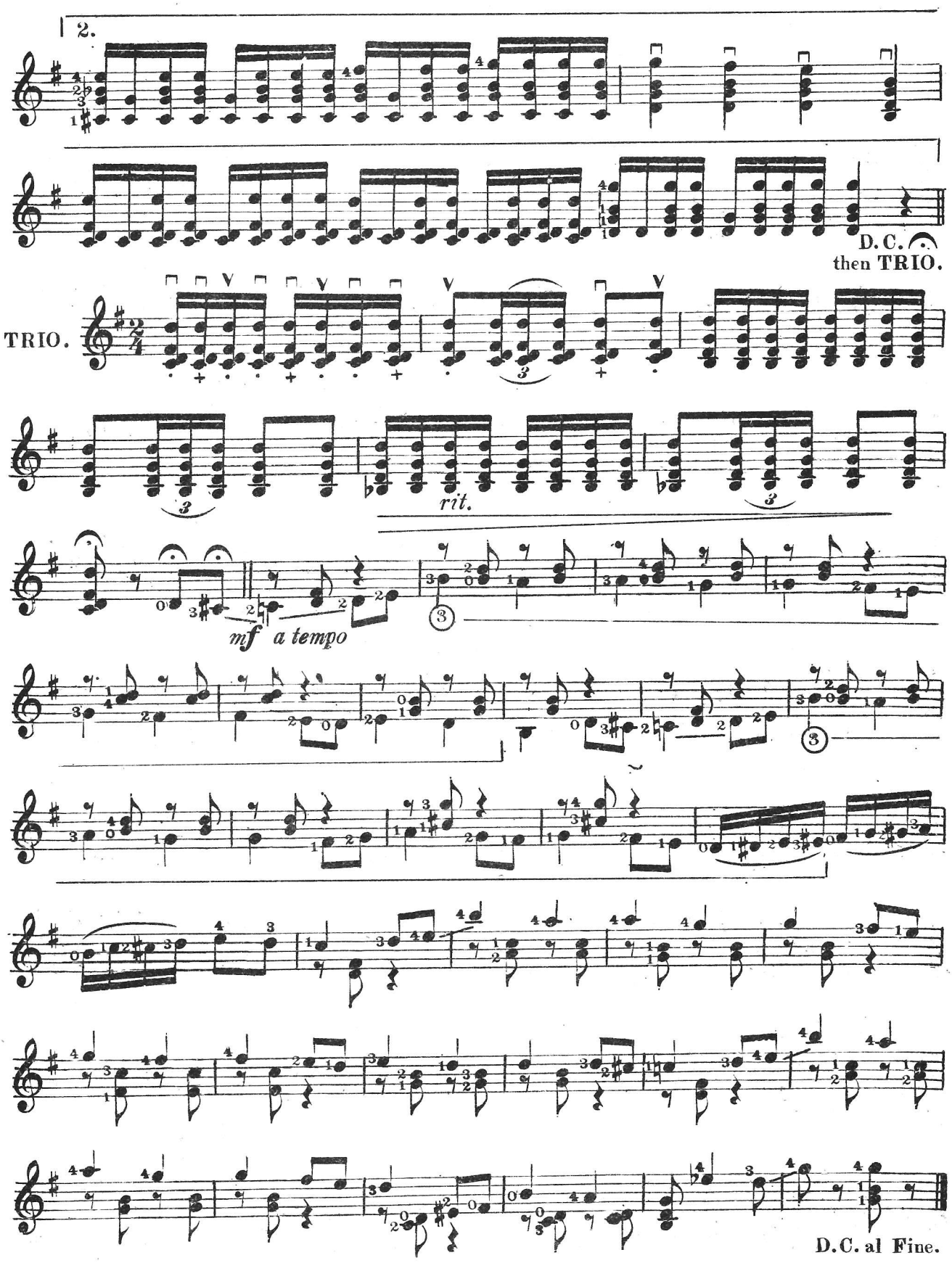
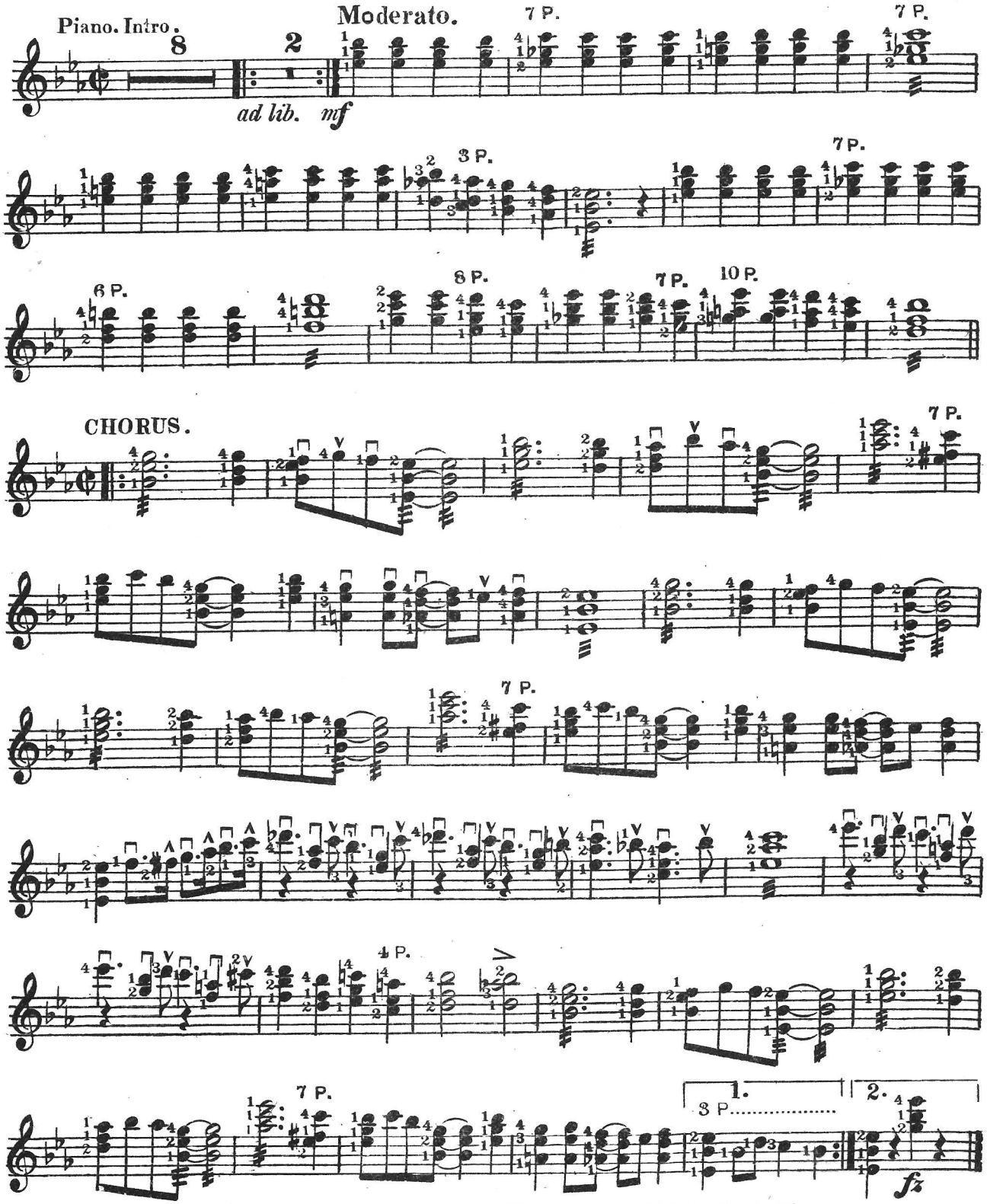
May/29.

UKULELE SOLO.

May/29.

I Ain't Never Been Kissed.

PLECTRUM BANJO SOLO.

Arr. by **ERNEST TAYLOR.** Music by **JOS. GEO. GILBERT.**

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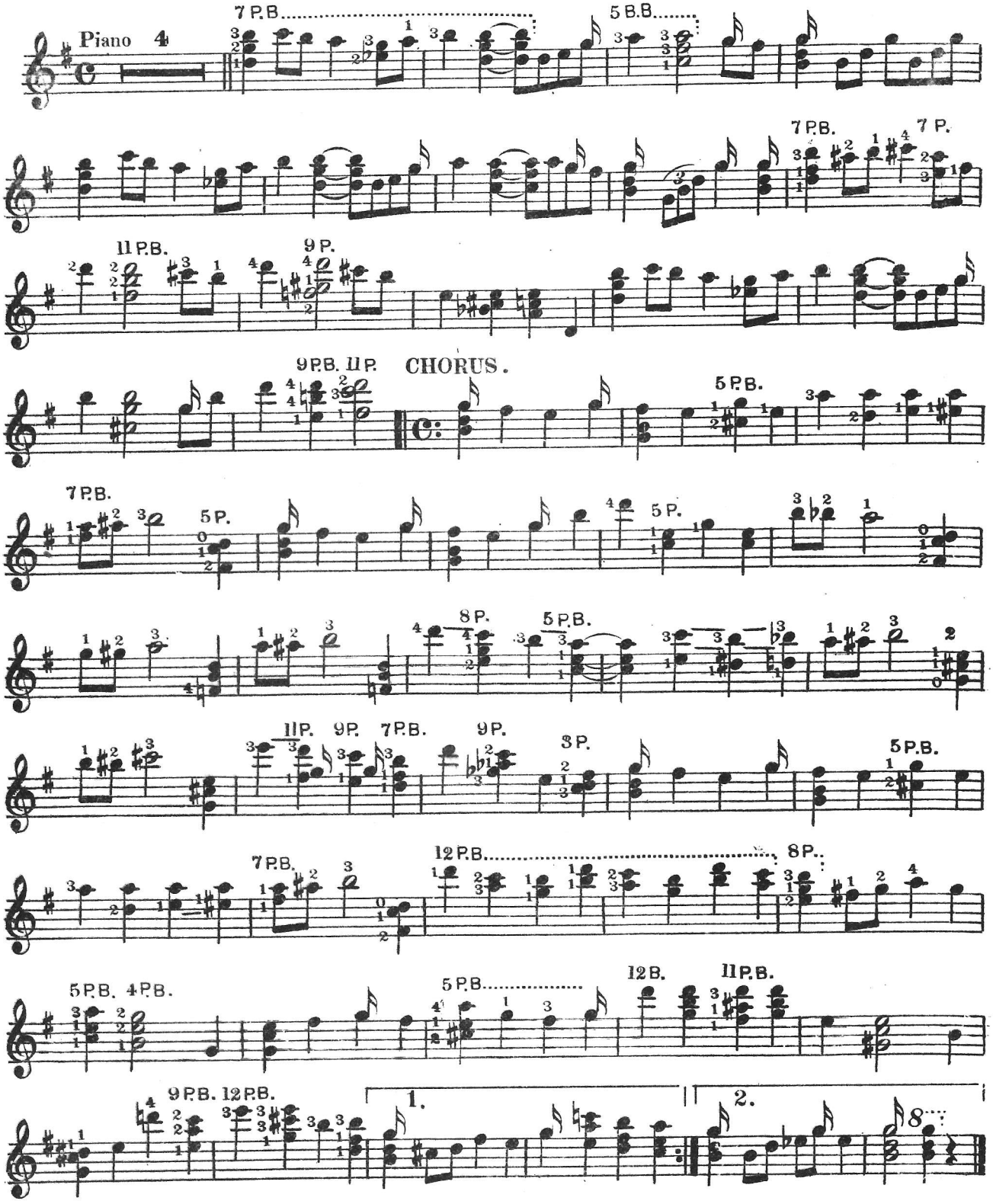
May/29.

I CAN'T GIVE YOU ANY THING BUT LOVE.

Arr. by BERNARD SHEAFF. BANJO SOLO. J. Mc HUGH.

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The Lawrence Wright Music Co Denmark Street, Charing Cross Rd London. W.C. 2.

May/29.

PLECTRUM AND TENOR BANJO MUSIC IN THIS ISSUE.

By ERNEST TAYLOR.

"I AIN'T never been Kissed" is one of the Lawrence Wright Music Co.'s latest successes, and as a plectrum banjo solo it sounds excellent.

All the chords have been carefully fingered, and should be played exactly as written. Chords with three strokes through the stem must be played tremolo. In the chorus there are several cases where the tremolo is met with on the end quaver of a group, and continued on to the tied minim; in such cases care must be taken to commence the tremolo neatly and thoroughly, immediately the quaver is reached.

The time in bars 6 and 7 of the chorus, and in similar bars, must be counted carefully, special care being taken where the tied notes occur. Bars 17, 18, 21 and 22 of the chorus must also be played carefully. Note that the accompanying chords in these bars are to be played exactly on the second and fourth beats in each case.

"Shinaniki Da," a 6-8 number by Harry Carlton, the writer of "Constantinople," is another of the Lawrence Wright Co.'s big hits, and has been arranged for the benefit of tenor banjo or tenor guitar players. It is particularly suitable as a speciality number on the latter instrument, as according to the words of the song, "Shinaniki Da, he play the Guitar, outside a Bazaar."

All notes with three strokes through the stem must be played tremolo, the rest staccato.

No difficulty should be experienced in the playing of this solo by the player of average ability.

The published song copies of either of the above should be purchased by those players who wish to have a piano accompaniment.

AT a concert held on April 11th, at the Bishopsgate Lecture Hall, London, the Ridler Banjoists, the members of which are Misses. A. & L. Ridler, R. Langmead, G. Hitchen and Mr. C. Newman, gave "The Spanish Romance" (Grimshaw); encore number, "An Indian Patrol" (Grimshaw). In response to persistent calls the members gave as a second encore, "Romance in C minor" (Ellis).

PLECTRUM SOLOS I STOCK.

For G and TENOR BANJO.

THE DOLL DANCE	*arr. Dave Thomas*	2/-
MEMORIES OF THE SOUTH	*Roy Smeck*	2/-
A BANJO VAMP	*Emile Grimshaw*	2/-
BEAT AS YOU GO	*Emile Grimshaw*	2/-
BANJOMANIA	*Pete Mandell*	2/-
TUNE TONIC	*Emile Grimshaw*	2/-
LISTEN TO THIS	*Emile Grimshaw*	2/-
TATTOO	*Emile Grimshaw*	2/-
TAKE YOUR PICK	*Pete Mandell*	2/-
COON'S CARNIVAL	*Leonard Shevill*	2/-
THE KILTIES	*Emile Grimshaw*	2/-
THE BANSHEE	*Emile Grimshaw*	2/-
HAPPY GO LUCKY	*Emile Grimshaw*	2/-
LOLLIPOPS	*Harry Reser*	2/-
ECCENTRIC	*Russel Robinson*	2/-
TICKLING THE BANJO	*W. Morris*	2/-
CRAZY JOE	*Harry Reser*	2/-
PICKIN'S	*Harry Reser*	2/-
SAVOY RAG	*Pete Mandell*	2/-
STARS ARE SHINING	*Emile Grimshaw*	2/-
SPEEDWELL	*Emile Grimshaw*	2/-
CAT'S PYJAMAS	*Harry Jenkes*	2/-
A MEXICAN RIDE	*Emile Grimshaw*	2/-
HOT DOG	*Will Van Allen*	2/-
DAINTY MISS	*Bernard Barnes*	2/-
SUGAR AND SPICE	*E. T. Taylor*	2/-

For TENOR BANJO ONLY.

KEYBOARD KAPERS	*arr. M. de Pietro*	2/-
LITTLE FINGER TRICKS	*Pete Mandell*	2/-
TAMIN' THE TENOR	*Len Fillis and Syd Bright*	2/-
THE CLOCK AND THE BANJO	*Harry Reser*	2/-
SORT OF UNCERTAIN	*Len Fillis and Syd Bright*	2/-
BANJOVIALITY	,, ,,	2/-
UNCANNY BANJO	,, ,,	2/-

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The latest Plectrum and Tenor Banjo Solo—"Sugar and Spice"—now ready.

ERNEST JONES.

LOCAL musical circles have heard with satisfaction that Mr. Ernest Jones, the well-known banjoist, is about to make records for the Columbia Company. This is, of course, the outcome of the recent audition which the company held at Messrs. Lewis's, Birmingham.

Although broadcast listeners are familiar with Mr. Jones' playing, this will be their first opportunity of acquiring, in permanent form, examples of his skill on an instrument which, in capable hands, is inherent with notable musical possibilities. Mr. Jones is a musician to his finger tips, and though he finds it necessary to give his wide public a repertoire embracing popular music, he can at any time draw on an extensive field of classical compositions. Like Mr. Lionel Tertis, that famous player of the viola, Mr. Jones has to make use of much music originally written for another medium, but his transcriptions are always admirably done. Apart from an amazingly nimble technique this fine banjoist has an able command of chordal effects on his instrument which makes it possible for him to use music usually considered beyond the resources of the banjo. His records will be awaited with interest.

QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

Q. Why do zither banjos having five strings invariably have machines with six pegs?

A. The best makers fit what are known commercially as "Guitar machines," for these are the finest quality obtainable. Also the resulting uniformity in the appearance of the banjo machine head is an advantage.

Queries and Answers—*Continued.*

Q. The 4th string on my banjo continually buzzes, even a new string.

A. If it is only the open string you mean, see if the slot in the nut is too deep, allowing the string to foul the 1st fret; or the slot in the bridge may be too wide.

Q. The gut 1st and 5th quickly break on my banjo. Shall I use wire?

A. If you are satisfied with the tone. Our best players compromise and use an artificial string made from silk in place of a real gut.

Q. Can I obtain "Husurenritt" as a banjo solo?

A. It is a piano solo, and no banjo arrangement is published.

Q. I have placed my bridge in the correct position so that the 12th fret is in the middle of the vibrating strings, but the notes in the upper register are sharp. What is the remedy?

A. The maker's attention should be drawn to the matter if the strings are quite true; and they are not more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch above the 22nd fret.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of KEYNOTES, Dublin.

DEAR SIR,—Just a line to tell you how much I and my friends appreciate the articles and music.

Please give us some more solos like "The Young Student."

Also some more ukulele solos on the style of "Bourrée Loure" and some suitable for tremolo playing, *i.e.*, 4-note, such as "Eileen Alannah" in E, "Home Sweet Home" in A. I often play the latter type, and they seem to get over well.

Trusting you will still have the ukulele and guitar sections in KEYNOTES for a long time.

Yours very truly, J. P. S.

To the Editor of KEYNOTES,

DEAR SIR,—I read the letter from a member of the Luton Mandolin Band in your April issue with much interest.

I also read Mr. B. W. Dykes' spirited article in the March issue of KEYNOTES with still greater interest.

But surely "A Member" has not interpreted Mr. Dykes' article correctly. *He* is talking about a "*Club*," and "A Member" is talking about a "*Band*."

In these days *B.M.G. Club* and *B.M.G. Band* are not quite synonymous terms. The one implies a gathering of banjo, mandoline and guitar (or any fretted instrument) enthusiasts who meet for social intercourse and to entertain one another by solo playing, as well as combination playing.

The other implies a gathering for concerted playing principally.

A Club is more or less a public affair. A Band is more or less a private affair.

There are scores of bands in the country. I hope soon to see hundreds of clubs. Yours, etc.,

K. D.

To the Editor of KEYNOTES,

DEAR SIR,—With reference to the De Vekey Long Scale Ukulele with which you recently supplied me, I have much pleasure in informing you that I consider it is easily the finest instrument of its class.

It is impossible not to admire the rich tone and even response, and it is a superb production in every way.

Mr. De Vekey is to be congratulated in producing such an excellent instrument at a reasonable price.

Yours faithfully, REX HARRIS.

Now Ready. "A Banjo Frolic"—"Ad Astra"—"Dimples," By Joe Morley.

NOW READY

A FINE NEW SOLO BY A MASTER of the ZITHER BANJO

"REGIMENTAL QUICKSTEP"

By BERNARD SHEAFF

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Equally suitable for Banjo or Zither Banjo.

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THE STRAND B.M.G. ORCHESTRA.
(Derby and District.)

THE Strand B.M.G. Orchestra (Derby and District) held their March meeting at the Studio of Messrs. Edgar Horne & Co., Derby, the programme being as follows :—

Concerted items, "Tattoo" and "The Possums' Picnic." Quintette, banjos, "Circus Parade," Messrs. Chattoe, Hall, Ellis, Horobin, and Mrs. Dawson. Steel guitar duets, with Spanish guitar accompaniment, "Liliha Waltz," "Momi," Mrs. Dawson, Mr. Thos. Chattoe, Mr. A. Dawson. Quintette, banjos, "Pinxter Flower," Miss D. Winfield, Mrs. Dawson, Messrs. E. Horobin, J. H. Ellis, T. Chattoe. Concerted items, "A Mexican Ride," "Tune Tonic." Banjo trio, "Butterfly," Messrs. Ellis, Chattoe and Mrs. Dawson. Banjo quartette, "Banjo Vamp," Mrs. Dawson, Messrs. R. Hall, J. H. Ellis and T. Chattoe.

PRESTON B.M.G. CLUB.

THE monthly meeting, arranged by Mr. Ernest Taylor, was held on April 10th. The following items were rendered :—

Orchestral selection, "Beda." Banjo duet, Miss O. Morgan and Mr. E. Taylor, "A Banjo Oddity." Plectrum banjo, Miss M. Taylor, "In the Evening by the Moonlight." Plectrum banjo, Mr. H. Smith, "Pickin's." Plectrum banjo, Mr. P. Atkinson, "Bunch o' Keys." Tenor banjo, Mr. A. Peters, "Memories of the South." Mandoline duet, Mrs. and Miss Hardley, "Comical Coons." Banjo, Mr. E. Taylor, "A Winter's Tale." Banjoline and banjo Sextette, "Rugby Parade."

A joint recital was given by Miss G. Fisher (banjo) and Miss E. Hunter (banjolin), who played the following numbers : duets, "Daddy Longlegs" and "A Black Coquette." ; banjo solo, "A Darkey's Romance" ; banjoline solo, "Evening Zephyr." The performance given by these two artists was very much enjoyed.

Miss M. Taylor was the accompanist.

THE PARKSTONE B.M.G. CLUB.

THE Parkstone B.M.G. Club held their usual fortnightly meeting on April 11th, when the following items were played, in addition to ensemble practice.

Solos : "To the Front," Mr. Strike ; "Mountaineers' March," Mr. Oliver ; "Beat as you go," Mr. Hatfield ; "Prairie Flower," Mr. Rose ; "The Ringmaster," Mr. Phillips ; "A Banjo Vamp," "Beat as you go," Mr. Alway (visitor) ; duet : "Niggertown," Messrs. Hatfield and Oliver ; trio : "Reverie in F," Messrs. Hatfield, Oliver and Whorwood.

LEIGH-ON-SEA BEACHCOMBERS B.M.G. CLUB

THE following items were played at the April meeting : banjo, "Alabama Rose," "Mazurka Hongroise," "Fernbank," Mr. Dehar ; "To the Front," "For the Flag," "Humoreske," Mr. Rivers ; "Circus Parade," W. H. Mills ; "Dreams of Darkie Land," Mr. Waddington ; "Keynotes Rag," "Beat as you go," Mr. P. Edwards ; "The Kilties," Miss Spicer ; "American Medley," Mr. Pratt ; "Broadway Promenade," Mr. Griffin. Mandoline : "March de Mandolineste," (Obregon) Mr. Henry. Hawaiian guitars quartette : "Momi," "Aloahe," Miss Hunter, Mr. and Mrs. Waddington and Mr. Henry. Community numbers : "Return of the Regiment," "Darkies' Romance," "Musical Ride," and "Marguerite Waltz."

We were pleased to welcome as our guest our old friend, Mr. Harry Marsh, conductor of the Aston Banjo Orchestra.

The latest Plectrum and Tenor Banjo Solo—"Sugar and Spice."

THE LEEDS B.M.G. CLUB.

THE above club had their weekly practice on April 18th, with a very good attendance of members. This Club has been formed by Mr. W. Whittington, the banjo teacher of Leeds, for the benefit of past and present pupils. Any past pupils who wish to become members please communicate with Mr. W. Whittington, 47, Longroyd Terrace, Burton Road, Leeds.

The Community items played were: "Beat as you go," "Bonnie Scotland," "Night Club Parade," "Tired Tim." The voluntary numbers were: "White Coons," Messrs. Bew and Whittington; "Georgia Medley," Messrs. Grice and Metcalfe; "Pro Patria," Mr. Wilkinson; "Banjo Oddity," Mr. Shoesmith; "Kennedy Galop," Messrs. Metcalfe and Whittington; "Dance Bon Bon," Mr. W. Whittington,

THE NORTH LONDON B.M.G. CLUB.

THE North London B.M.G. Club held their seventh meeting on 25th of March at the Adult School Hall, Wood Green. A very pleasant evening was spent, the programme consisting of Request items, community playing and voluntary solos. "Sprig of Shillelagh" is to be adopted as a further community number.

Any players interested will be made welcome at the above address on 29th May.

THE LONDON B.M.G. CLUB.

THE April meeting was held at the Y.M.C.A., Tottenham Court Road, on Monday, the 15th ult. Among those present were the president, Mr. Bernard Sheaff and two vice-presidents, Mr. Joe Morley and Mr. A. D. Cammeyer. After playing the 1928 Presidential March, the members had the pleasure of hearing the president play the 1929 Presidential March, "Regimental Quickstep" (Sheaff); members are reminded that this will be the opening number for the remainder of the year.

The following compulsory playing took place: Miss Leathwick, "Freckles" (Morley); Mr. S. Single, "Comical Coons" (Grimshaw); Miss J. Holland, "Caprice Accidental" (Cammeyer); Miss E. Shuter, "In Honeyland" (Cammeyer); Mr. M. L. Smith, "Kilties" (Grimshaw); Mr. W. Herbert, "Mountaineers" (Morley); Mr. J. P. Cuninghame, "Banjoland" (Morley); Mr. H. H. Godman, "Rugby Parade" (Oakley); Mr. P. Lavender, "Freckles" (Morley); Mr. H. White; Mr. G. Mills, "Darkie Chuckle" (Morley).

After refreshments the community playing took place, when Mr. J. Morley led the members through one of the items, "Circus Parade" (Morley). The following were chosen for the next meeting, which takes place on Monday, May 14th, at 8 p.m.: "Clubmates" (Troise), "Minstrel Man" (Grimshaw); "To the Front" (Cammayer); and "King of Clubs" (Musselbrook).

An extremely interesting recital was given by Mr. M. L. Davies, who played "Sammy on Parade," "Funeral March of a Marionette," "Bolero" and "Old Man River." The recital was greatly enjoyed by all present.

Mr. Gibbons will give the member's recital at the May meeting.

Mr. Joe Morley played two of his own pieces during the voluntary period that followed, "Billet D'Amour" and "Kingdom Comin'."

Volumn IV of KEYNOTES, from January to December, 1928 contains the following Banjo Solos, arranged finger style, in addition to Solos for the Guitar, Ukulele and Steel Guitar, etc., and articles of interest.

Ain't that a Grand and Glorious Feeling
The Doll Dance
I Ain't got Nobody
Where, O Where do I Live
Charmaine
Nicolette
Tired Hands
C'est Vous
Worrin'
Bless her Little Heart
My Inspiration is You
Stay out of the South

PRICE 7/- POST FREE.

THE ABERDEEN B.M.G. CLUB.

THE April meeting of the Aberdeen B.M.G. Club opened with the presidential march, "The Return of the Regiment." Other community numbers were "Comical Coons" and "Butterfly Valse." Piano solos: "Sonny Boy," "Don't be like that," E. Dean. Banjo duets, "Georgia Medley," "Kilties," N. Fraser, R. Morgan. Mandoline solos with piano accompaniment, "Rena Waltz," "Night Winds," J. Van Lyle, E. Dean. Mandoline trio, "True Blue," E. Ritchie, V. Porter, R. Charles. Banjo solo, "Il Bacio," J. Yule; Banjo solo, "George Square Waltz," W. H. Thomson. Mandoline duets, "A Summer Idyll," "State Patrol," "Frances," J. Yule, J. Van Lyle. Banjo quartette, "Cameradie," N. Fraser, R. Morgan, J. Marr, W. H. Thomson. Vocal solo, with banjo accompaniment, "Lily of Laguna," J. Yule. Community number, "God Save the King."

THE BRISTOL B.M.G. CLUB.

THE above Club have had a busy week. On April 3rd and 4th twelve of the members gave their service on behalf of the Seamen's and Boatmen's Friend Society at a Sailors' Bazaar, held at Terrett Memorial Hall. Sixteen selections were played each evening from their repertoire, and banjo solos were played by Master W. Ball as follows: "You and a Canoe" (Grimshaw), "Tune Tonic" (Grimshaw), "Jacko on Parade" (Morley), "Thumbs Up" (Morley).

The Bristol Banjo Trio (Messrs. Saunders, North and Sharp) played selections recently broadcast from Cardiff.

The music performed was greatly appreciated, and compliments were expressed by several people who were surprised at the variety of pieces given. The Secretary and committee heartily thanked the Club for their services, and it was announced that £262 had been taken in the two days.

The Club meeting took place on April 5th. Several fresh pieces were taken in hand. Banjo solos, "Radio Jig" (Morley), "Pimpernel" (Morley), "Gallopade" (Cammeyer), "Belle of Columbia" (R. Brooks), Mr. Alf North. Banjo duet, "Happy Go Lucky" (Grimshaw), Mr. and Master Ball. Banjo solo, "Cheerio" (Grimshaw), Mr. Brazier. Banjo solo, "Stars are Shining" (Grimshaw), Mr. Griffiths. Banjo trio, "Rugby Parade" (O. Oakley), Messrs. Sharp, Mulligan and Saunders.

Further ensemble playing followed, and a very enjoyable evening was spent. We are still longing for guitar players,

A successful meeting was held on April 19th, when the following pieces were played:—

Club, "Tattoo" (Grimshaw), "Blue Danube" Waltz (Paroletti), "Nigger Minstrels (Grimshaw). Banjo duet, "Sweet Jasamine" (Oakley,) Mr. Ball and Son. Banjo duet, "Bonnie Scotland" (Kennedy), Messrs. Jenkins and Witcombe. Banjo solos, "Joy Ride" (Morley), "Regimental March" (Sheaff), Mr. Alf North. Quartet, banjolines and banjos, "Kilties" (Grimshaw), Miss Bray, Messrs. Matthews, Mulligan and W. Ball. Club, "My Inspiration is You" (Nicholls) "Gloriana" (Glynn).

Repairs to all Musical Instruments—at John Alvey Turner's.

Playing from Symbols.—By B. Sheldon Green.

PLAYING from symbols has become almost universal in U.S.A., and I am told that a very large percentage of British players have fallen into line.

By what process of reasoning some teachers conclude that symbol playing is easier than actual note playing, only they know.

To me the task appears to be a colossal one, *and then not quite satisfactory*. A symbol means nothing to a player who does not know what it represents. Get me ?

The symbol player (worth his salt) must needs know the notes which make up the chord represented by each symbol, and, accordingly, he must have a " very excellent " memory.

Acquiring this knowledge is in itself " some " task—but it is only the beginning of worries. *Each chord must also be known in its various inversions and positions*, because, bless you, *" the top note of the printed chord must be kept on top."*

Now, let's take G for example. This symbol stands for the notes G, B, D, F—four notes, therefore four formations.

Taking only six major keys, we would get $6 \times 4 = 24$ different formations. Get to work on all possible chords in all possible keys, and find out how many formations must be learned.

The whole business, to my mind, is stupid in the extreme.

And why, in the name of all that's wonderful, do champions of this method (?) stop at reading only one note of the printed chord (the top note) ? It is very nearly as easy to read three notes as one—in fact, an experienced player (such as a good orchestral banjoist *should* be) would rather read in chords.

It has been proved over and over again that we learn quickest per medium of the eye. In time the eye grows so accustomed to chord reading that there is no conscious attempt (really no attempt at all) to read each separate note. Just as is the case in reading the words I am writing down now.

When we are children we spell out—" c - a - t "—and make *cat* of it—but when we know a bit more we call it *cat*, without any hesitation. This is exactly what a player who has the nerve to expect a fee should be able to do with his chord reading. *Another very strong objection I have to the symbol system is that it disregards entirely any semblance of chord progression.*

It would be a funny sort of harmony which permitted us to wander round in the manner suggested by the symbol system. *This system isolates each chord and then gives it a symbol* based on the root note and the intervals.

The following example will illustrate my point.

Being a waltz movement the chords are shown as an accompaniment, the melody being separated.

The first chord formation is C♯, E, B♭, which, of course, is part of the diminished 7th chord on C♯.

Now the diminished 7th chord on C♯ usually resolves on to (or into) the tonic chord of "D" minor, and looking ahead we find this chord in the third and fourth bars. Keeping this in mind we name our chord formations thus:—

1st Chord—Dim. 7th on C♯.
2nd Chord—Domt. Com. Chord of " D " minor.
3rd Chord—Same in a different position.
4th Chord—Domt. 7th Chord of " D " minor, resolving into the Tonic in the next bar.

This gives us a regular chord progression, which is harmonically correct. But what would the symbol system (?) give us ?

Here you re :—
1st Chord—C♯ dim. 7th.
2nd Chord—A.
3rd Chord.—Ditto.
4th Chord.—A7.
5th Chord.—D min.

There is no sort of Chord progression at all ; and this, in my opinion, damns the method altogether, particularly where those who are trying to study harmony are concerned. If a piece of music stand in the key of " C," the notes A, C, E constitute the *submediant chord*, and *NOT* " A " minor.

Some form of modulation must appear before a chord can be named as part of *another* key. Similarly, G, B, D is the Dominant Chord of the key of " C " major, and *NOT* tonic of " G " major.

Lastly, it is quite impossible to allot a symbol for every possible chord formation, at times, giving quite an erroneous impression. For instance, the German 6th (in the key of " C " which is made up of the Notes A♭, C, E♭, F♯, would be symbolised as a 7th Chord, thus, A♭7, which, of course, is really ridiculous.

I have endeavoured in this article to show that the symbol system is not satisfactory, and I hope readers will ponder well what I have written, and give up this make-shift, misleading, system (?).

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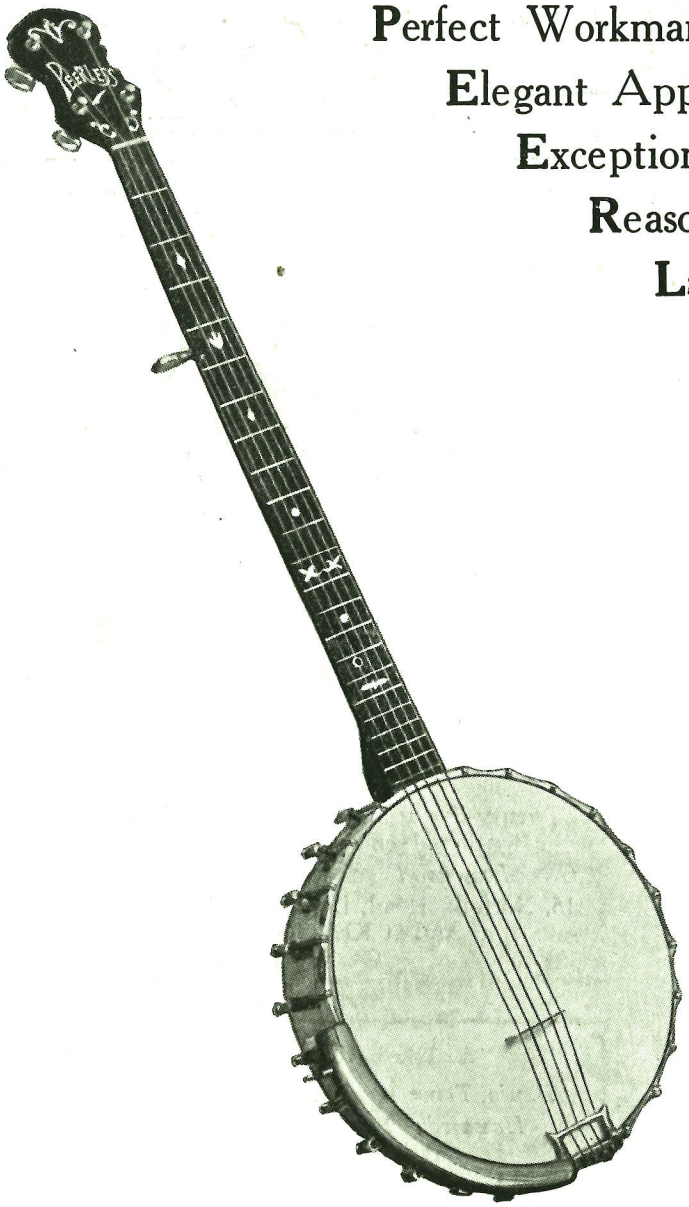

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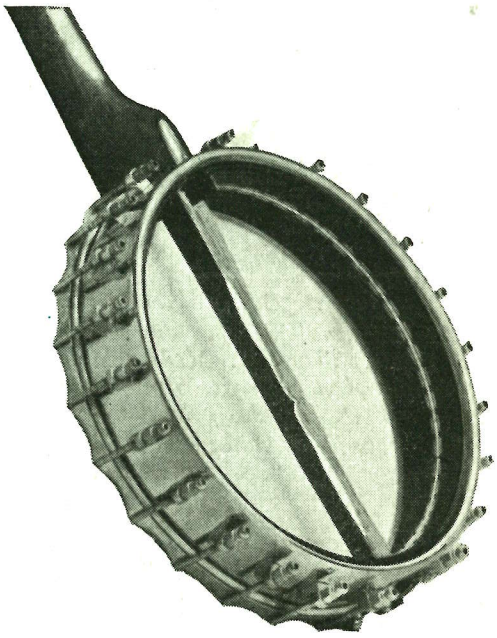

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